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# St. Francis in Ecstasy (Bellini)

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## ST. FRANCIS IN ECSTASY (BELLINI)

In the morning, the voices wake him.  
A crack in the rock fixes the light.  
He looks west with the egret and donkey.  
A cluster of copper-green leaves  
shakes above the fissure.  
He forgets his sandals by the bed,  
his open book on the table.

## ALBA

If the morning could keep this frieze  
of rumpled sheets like fossil imprints  
in the lumpy bed, then I might also  
keep the hawk over the ravine, the flawed  
image in the mirror, the new wine.

Last night in the empty vineyards  
I looked west to the fast-moving clouds  
over Rocher des Vierges, and I wanted to hold that.  
And hold the silence—or almost silence—  
broken by a few barking dogs and the sound  
of the seedpods shaking on the plane tree.

Impossible to keep anything. Impossible  
to carry anything away, at least  
not what I want to take: fistfuls  
of flowering herbs, the wind from any  
of the six directions, love's progress—  
if, that is, it's possible for love  
to progress, when it may be rooted  
like local honey in the domain  
with the stubborn vines, among the strong  
flavors of this world, rose garlic, aneth,  
black radishes—and you, this morning.